

MAINE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 5, 2004

Chief Darrel Fournier called the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Maine Emergency Medical Services conference room, 16 Edison Drive, Augusta, Maine. Members present were Jack Berry, Jay Bradshaw, Representative Thomas Bull, Chief Jeffrey Cammack, Art Cleaves, John Dean, Representative Robert Duplessie, Chief Darrel Fournier, Albert Godfrey, Sr., Geoffrey Maker, Senator Richard Nass, David Wacker, Leslie Wiles (for Bill Williams), Steve Willis and Susan Pinette (staff). Ted Johnston was excused and members absent from the meeting included Michael Albert, Representative Patricia Blanchette, Senator Bruce Bryant, John Cannon, Harty Norris, and Chief Jethro Pease.

Fire Commission members made several corrections to the December 1, 2003 meeting minutes.

1. Page 1, 1st paragraph The correct address is Edison Drive
2. Page 2 and 3, 2nd motion The correct spelling is Superintendent Onieal
3. Page 3, 2nd paragraph and 3rd motion Title 29A is the correct statute
4. Page 4, 2nd paragraph The word “were” was removed

A motion by Jeff Maker, seconded by Al Godfrey, to accept the amended minutes of December 1, 2003. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports of Committees

The Training Facilities committee met in January and although the meeting was not well attended, the report is almost two thirds complete. Members have been assigned the final sections and expect to complete the report soon. The committee plans to meet prior to the Fire Commission’s February 1st meeting.

The Best Practices committee submits three nominations for consideration to the Fire Commission for a 2003 Best Practice award. The nominees are Gary Cole and the Cole Foundation, the Foster Regional Applied Technology Center Fire Fighting Program, and the Lakes Region Mutual Aide Company, Inc.

A motion by Jeff Cammack, seconded by Richard Nass, to award a 2003 Maine Fire Protection Services Commission Best Practices Award to the three nominees – Gary Cole and the Cole Foundation, the Foster Regional Applied Technology Center Fire Fighting Program, and the Lakes Region Mutual Aide Company, Inc. The motion passed unanimously.

The Spring Conference committee has been very busy. A draft of the brochure and pre-registration form was distributed to Fire Commission members. Members made numerous suggestions and corrections to the draft. Workshops and conference participants were finalized. A preliminary schedule was accepted:

Blaine House Conference on Emergency First Response

8-8:45am	Registration/coffee	
9:00am	Welcome (Chief Darrel Fournier)	
9- 9:45am	Keynote/presentation	(30mins-talk, 15mins-Q&A)
9:45-10:30	Keynote/presentation	(30mins-talk, 15mins-Q&A)
10:30-11am	Break	
11-11:45am	Panel Discussion "Making the Partnership Work"	
12noon	Lunch (Governor Baldacci and Best Practice award presentation)	
1:15-2pm	Workshops (choose 1)	
2:15-3pm	Workshops (choose 1)	

The morning session will consist of two keynote/presentations tentatively featuring Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge and Superintendent Dennis Onieal of the National Fire Academy. Other speakers include Ed Houlihan from Penflex discussing recruitment and retention issues. Plans include two thirty-minute presentations, each followed by a fifteen-minute period for questions. Following a short break, the morning session will then resume with a panel discussion titled "Making the Partnership Work". Eight to ten panelists representing federal, state, county and local agencies will discuss a variety of issues, including cooperation, funding and local frustration. Organizations that participated at the 2003 Fire Service Day at the State House will be asked to set up their displays at the Spring Conference. They include, but are not limited to, the Professional Firefighters, the State Federation of Firefighters, the Maine Chiefs, the Bureau of Labor Standards, Maine Fire Training and Education, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Maine Forest Service and Maine Emergency Medical Services.

Luncheon will include a speech by Governor Baldacci. The Governor will also present the three 2003 "Best Practices" awards.

The afternoon session will offer five workshops. The 45 -minute workshops will be offered twice so conferees can attend two workshops. Fire Commission members agreed to the following workshop schedule:

<u>Workshop</u>	<u>1:15-2pm</u>	<u>215-3pm</u>
1. Recruitment/retention	Darrel	Jack
2. "Superintendent Onieal"	Steve	-
3. Health Care	John C	Jeff C
4. Safety standards	Dave	Dave
5. SAFER Act	Jeff C	John C

Old Business

Fire Commission members voted unanimously at the November 3, 2003 meeting that current Maine law regarding the use of sirens on personal vehicles en route to an emergency should be maintained. Members receive a draft of the proposed language on the use of lights on the personal vehicles of volunteer emergency first responders.

A motion by Tom Bull, seconded by Jay Bradshaw, to amend F(2) by adding "must be mounted on the front of the vehicle and in a manner". The motion passed with two members opposed (Jack Berry and Richard Nass)

A motion by Jay Bradshaw, seconded by Bob Duplessie, to strike "red" in F(3). The motion passed unanimously.

A motion by Jay Bradshaw, seconded by Bob Duplessie, to rescind the previous motion striking "red" in F(3) and asking staff to draft language to give EMS personnel in F(3) the same authority of firefighters in F(2). The motion passed unanimously. *(See attached copy)*

Fire Commission members discussed possible solutions for funding of the State Fire Marshal's Office, Maine Fire Training and Education, recruitment and retention of volunteers and health care for firefighters. One possible funding mechanism discussed by members was the state's general fund and the insurance premium tax. Members agreed that further information was needed and suggested inviting representatives from the Bureau of Insurance and Bureau of Revenue Services to the February meeting. Members had a long discussion about retained risk, whether there should be a reporting requirement for businesses

that retain risk, and the difficulty of obtaining accurate numbers. Members also discussed valuation and it being an indicator of how much protection is needed. Members also discussed drafting legislation, submitting legislation this session, “resolve” versus “act”, and laying out the issues prior to starting the discussion. Members agreed with the suggestion to form a committee to look at the issues and begin work on drafting legislation.

A motion by Jack Berry, seconded by Jeff Maker, that the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, as part of its charge to explore alternative revenue sources for the State Fire Marshal’s Office, Maine Fire Training and Education and recruitment and retention of volunteers, draft legislation to seek money from the state’s General Fund and 2% insurance premium tax.

A motion by Jack Berry, seconded by Jeff Maker, to amend the motion and add health care. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion to accept the amended motion passed unanimously.

Two vacancies remain on the Fire Commission- the representative from the Governor’s Office and the representative of the insurance industry.

Members received an update on the public hearing on fire-safe cigarettes. The Fire Commission sent a letter in December 2003 to the Health and Human Services committee in support of LD 1127 “An Act To Require Fire Safe Cigarettes in the State”. Members learned the HHS committee was waiting for information from New York. New York recently passed similar legislation.

Fire Commission members also learned of two EMS and two SFMO department bills being heard by legislative committees in January. Members were informed of two personnel changes on the Criminal Justice/Public Safety Committee- Representative Patricia Blanchette of Bangor (new House chair of CJPS and a member of the Fire Commission) and Representative Janet Mills of Farmington.

Members received a copy of an editorial in the Kennebec Journal “Feds Go Wild with Spending for Security.”

Chief Fournier will submit an article for the January edition of the Maine Firefighter and mention the Spring conference.

Fire Commission members agreed to the following meeting schedule:

Monday, February 2, 2004	1:00pm	Regular Meeting	State House Room 438
Monday, March 1, 2004	1:00pm	Regular Meeting	State House Room TBA
Monday, April 5, 2004	1:00pm	Regular Meeting	MEMS

With no further business to come before the Maine Fire Protection Services Commission, Chief Fournier adjourned the meeting at 3:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sec.1. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶C, sub- ¶1 is amended to read:

C. The use of amber lights on vehicles is governed by the following.

(1) A vehicle engaged in highway maintenance or in emergency rescue operations by civil defense and public safety agencies and a public utility emergency service vehicle may be equipped with auxiliary lights that emit an amber light. A personal fire vehicle authorized under paragraph F, subparagraph 2 may be equipped with and display auxiliary lights that emit an amber light visible up to 360 degrees only if the vehicle is at the scene of a fire or other emergency and the vehicle is stationary.

Sec.2. 29-A MRSA §2054, sub-§2, ¶F, sub- ¶2 is amended to read:

F. Only vehicles listed in this paragraph, rural mail vehicles as provided in paragraph C, subparagraph (5) and school buses may be equipped with, display or use a red auxiliary or emergency light.

(1) Emergency lights used on an ambulance, an emergency medical service vehicle, a fire department vehicle, a fire vehicle or a hazardous material response vehicle must emit a red light or a combination of red and white light and may be equipped with one blue light mounted at the rear of the vehicle so that the light is visible to approaching traffic.

(2) The municipal officers or a municipal official designated by the municipal officers, with the approval of the fire chief, may authorize an active member of a municipal or volunteer fire department to use a ~~flashing red signal light~~ red lights or a combination of red and white lights of a size capable of being mounted above the front bumper and below the roof of the vehicle. not more than 5 inches in diameter on a vehicle. The light or lights may be displayed but may be used only while the member is en route to or at the scene of a fire or other emergency. The light or lights must be mounted on the front of the vehicle and in a manner as near as practicable above the registration plate on the front of the vehicle or on the dashboard. ~~A light mounted on the dashboard must be shielded so that the emitted light does not interfere with the operator's vision.~~

(3) Members of an emergency medical service licensed by Maine Emergency Medical Services may display and use on a vehicle ~~a flashing red signal light~~ red lights or a combination of red and white lights of the same proportion, in the same location and under the same conditions as those permitted municipal and volunteer firefighters, when authorized by the chief official of the emergency medical service.